

REMARKS

In light of the above amendments and remarks to follow, reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

This invention provides for, *inter alia*, a novel method for stripping optical fibers that avoids any rise in temperature thereby maintaining the mechanical and chemical integrity of the various elements that make up the fiber.

Claims 1-55 were pending in this application. Claims 1, 4, and 18 have been amended. Claims 14-17 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1-13 and 18-55 are currently pending in this application.

Pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) Applicants petition the Director to extend the time period to file this response by three (3) months. Authorization to charge this fee to the firm's American Express account is appended herewith.

Drawing Objections

In paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to Figure 1 because it should be labeled as "Prior Art." Figure 1 has been corrected to include "Prior Art" as a legend. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Specification Objections

In paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Abstract and the disclosure. The Abstract and the disclosure have been corrected herein as required by the Examiner. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 14-55 as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim.

As previously mentioned, claims 14-17 have been canceled. Claim 18 has been amended and is now in independent form. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claim 18, as well as claims 19-55 which depend therefrom, is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejection

In paragraph 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-55 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-55, as presented herein, are believed to be in full compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112. Accordingly, withdrawal of the 112 rejection is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejections

In paragraph 8 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 7-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,481,638 to Roll.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a method of stripping an optical fiber. The method has 3 basic steps. In the first step, a portion of the outer covering of the fiber is locally and mechanically removed by cutting off a shaving of the covering. Then a chemical solvent is

placed on the periphery of the location of the fiber where the shaving was removed. In the last step, the covering weakened by the first two steps is removed.

On the other hand, Roll appears to disclose a process comprising of 2 basic steps. In the first step a first portion of a fiber is converted from a solid state to a partly fluid state by exposing the portion to an appropriate chemical. In the second step, the first portion is penetrated using knife edges. Roll does not appear to teach or suggest removing a shaving in the outer part of the fiber before applying a chemical as in the first two steps of claim 1. This is important feature of the present invention since the first step allows the chemical solvent to attack directly the inside of the covering (cf. p. 7, lines 1-7). Moreover, Roll does not suggest the beneficial results obtained by the inventive method and machine. As outlined on page 18 of the specification, the inventive method and machine provides for a stripped fiber that is very clean, a good interface between the stripped section and the covering; a preserved stripped core; good reproducibility in the stripping process with a low rejection rate; and fibers that exhibit good traction strength.

Accordingly, it is urged that the present claims are patentable over Roll. Therefore, withdrawal of the above §103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 9 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,481,638 to Roll in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,361,384 to Stepan.

Claim 6 depends from claim 1, and, due to such dependency, is believed to be distinguishable from Roll for at least the reasons previously described. The Examiner does not appear to have relied upon Stepan to overcome the above-described deficiencies of Roll. Accordingly, claim 6 is believed to be distinguishable from the applied combination of Roll and Stepan and, as such, withdrawal of the above 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-55

Although the Examiner did not examine claims 18-55 on the merits, it is respectfully submitted that claims 18-55 are distinguishable over the references applied by the Examiner for at least the reasons described above with regard to claims 1-13.

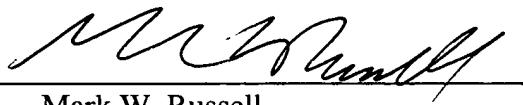
Conclusion

In the event, that the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing comments concerning the disclosures in the cited prior art, it is requested that the Examiner indicate where, in the reference, there is the basis for a contrary view.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable over the prior art, and early and favorable consideration thereof is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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